

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present U.S. Patent application as amended herein. Claims 1, 5, 11, and 15 have been amended. Claims 1-18 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4, 11, 13, 15 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,766,364 issued to Biamonte et al. (*Biamonte*). For at least the reasons set forth below, Applicants submit that claims 1-18 are not anticipated by *Biamonte*.

Claim 1 recites the following:

a primary voltage regulator coupled to an electrical load and to a power supply to provide a first amount of power, the primary voltage regulator to detect power supplied to the electrical load and to control one or more additional voltage regulators; and

a secondary voltage regulator coupled to the electrical load, to the power supply, and to the primary voltage regulator, the secondary voltage regulator to provide a second amount of power, the secondary voltage regulator to provide a signal to the primary voltage regulator to indicate whether the secondary voltage regulator is enabled.

Thus, Applicants claim a secondary voltage regulator coupled to a primary voltage regulator, the secondary voltage regulator providing a signal to the primary voltage regulator to indicate whether the secondary voltage regulator is enabled. Claims 5, 11, and 15 similarly recite a second voltage regulator providing a signal to a primary voltage regulator to indicate whether the secondary voltage regulator is enabled.

Biamonte discloses a power supply system with a master voltage regulator and a plurality of slave voltage regulators. The master regulator generates a control signal to control the output of the slave regulators to provide balanced load sharing. See col. 1, lines 53-60. Each slave regulator has its own error amplifier circuitry, including a local error signal, to allow the slave

regulator to control its own inductor current if the master control signal is outside of predefined limits. See col. 3, lines 21-25. *Biamonte* does not disclose, teach, or suggest a second voltage regulator providing a signal to a primary voltage regulator to indicate whether the secondary voltage regulator is enabled. This feature is explicitly recited in claims 1, 5, 11, and 15. Therefore, the present invention as claimed in claims 1, 5, 11, and 15 is not anticipated by *Biamonte*.

Claims 2-4, 13, and 17 are dependent claims and distinguish for at least the same reasons as their independent base claims in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Therefore, Applicant submits that claims 1-5, 11, 13, 15, and 17 are not anticipated by *Biamonte* for at least the reasons set forth above.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 5-7, 10, 12, 14 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Biamonte*. The Examiner rejected claims 8-9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Biamonte* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,191,943 issued to Tracy (*Tracy*).

As discussed above, *Biamonte* does not disclose, teach, or suggest a second voltage regulator providing a signal to a primary voltage regulator to indicate whether the secondary voltage regulator is enabled. *Tracy* discloses a docking station with a thermoelectric heat dissipation system for a docked portable computer. *Tracy* does not disclose, teach, or suggest a second voltage regulator providing a signal to a primary voltage regulator to indicate whether the secondary voltage regulator is enabled. This feature is explicitly recited in claims 1, 5, 11, and 15. Therefore, the present invention as claimed in claims 1, 5, 11, and 15 patentable over *Biamonte* and *Tracy*.

Claims 2-4, 5-10, 12-14 and 16-18 are dependent claims and distinguish for at least the same reasons as their independent base claims in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Therefore, Applicant submits that claims 12-4, 5-10, 12-14 and 16-18 are patentable over *Biamonte* and *Tracy* for at least the reasons set forth above.

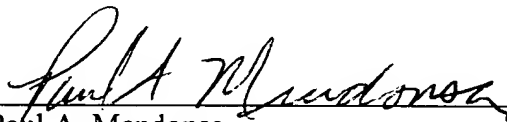
Conclusion

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the rejections have been overcome. Therefore, claims 1-18 are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is believed that such contact would further the examination of the present application.

Please charge any shortages and credit any overcharges to our Deposit Account number 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,
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MARKED-UP AMENDED CLAIMS

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Twice Amended) A circuit comprising:

a primary voltage regulator coupled to an electrical load and to a power supply to provide a first amount of power, the primary voltage regulator to detect power supplied to the electrical load and to control one or more additional voltage regulators; and

a secondary voltage regulator coupled to the electrical load, to the power supply, and to the [first] primary voltage regulator, the secondary voltage regulator to provide a second amount of power, the secondary voltage regulator [generating] to provide a signal to the primary voltage regulator to indicate whether [when power is supplied by] the secondary voltage regulator is enabled.

5. (Twice Amended) A system comprising:

a processor module having a processor and a primary voltage regulator coupled to supply a first amount of power to the processor, the primary voltage regulator also to detect power supplied to the processor by at least one additional voltage regulator and for controlling at least one additional voltage regulator and

a system board coupled to the processor module having a secondary voltage regulator coupled to supply a second amount of power to the processor, the secondary voltage regulator coupled to and controlled by the primary voltage regulator, the secondary voltage regulator to provide a signal to the primary voltage regulator to indicate whether the secondary voltage regulator is enabled.

11. (Twice Amended) A method for supplying power comprising:

supplying power via a [first] primary voltage regulator to an electrical load;
detecting whether a secondary voltage regulator is coupled to supply power to the electrical load;

supplying power to the electrical load with the secondary voltage regulator, if present, the second voltage regulator controlled by the primary voltage regulator, the second voltage regulator

providing a signal to the primary voltage regulator to indicate whether the secondary voltage regulator is enabled.

15. (Twice Amended) An apparatus for supplying power comprising:
means for supplying power via a [first] primary voltage regulator to an electrical load;
means for detecting whether a secondary voltage regulator is coupled to supply power to the electrical load;

means for supplying power to the electrical load with the secondary voltage regulator, if present, the second voltage regulator controlled by the primary voltage regulator, the second voltage regulator providing a signal to the primary voltage regulator to indicate whether the secondary voltage regulator is enabled.